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## VOICES OF THE SPRING.

SPRING has come, with her swift and silent steps, and with her the season of sweet sounds. The green fields and lonely dingles, the woodlands and burn-sides, resound with the unrivalled music of nature. Sweet voices are they every one of them. Let all but open their ear and their heart to the innocent bird-voices, and yield to the influences of their liquid melody, and we will answer for their deriving much comfort and great repose of mind from the strains. And in order that they may more fully appreciate the sounds, we will give them some slight sketch of the minstrels.

First comes thrilling on our ear the echoing music of the prophet of the spring—that 'wandering voice,' which, like all voices that have made themselves heard in the world, has received so mixed a meed of praise and blame—the cuckoo! Who can hear the name—in itself a song—without having his fancy forthwith charmed by a mental picture of fresh green fields flickered over with wandering shadows; hedges, rich with fragrant honeysuckle and silver blossoms; tender, bursting leaves; gold and silver crocuses; balm-breathing air, and skies of blue checkered with the mowy cloud-lands of April? As Wordsworth says—

By that voice beguiled,  
Thou wilt salute old memories as they throng  
Into thy heart; and fancies running wild  
Through fresh green fields and budding groves among,  
Will make thee happy—happy as a child;  
Of sunshine wilt thou think, and flowers, and song,  
And breathe as in a world where nothing can go wrong.

Full of happy promise is that note; monotonous, it is true, but what of that? Châteaubriand assures us, that monotony gives its greatest charm to music. St Gregory was of the like opinion; and we once heard a very pretty Italian street-song, in which the cry of the cuckoo, repeated as the burden, was most musical and effective. Moreover, it is the leading chord, the first sound of the grand spring overture, and of all the solos and choruses to come. Besides, there is an interesting mystery attached to this singer. He is seldom seen; he dwells apart; and to all save naturalists, who have pried into his little ways, scarcely appears a material bird, but partakes rather of the character of the viewless echo that replies to his call, or of the unseen fairies who dance to it. He is a natural ventriloquist. The voice is now here, now there; now close beside us, now far away—as perplexing to follow or to assign a locality as Ariel's music on the Enchanted Island.

Thrice welcome, darling of the spring!  
Even yet thou art to me  
No bird, but an invisible thing—  
A voice—a mystery.

Thus sings Wordsworth: and Mrs Hemans calls his note—

the cuckoo's viewless flute,  
Whose tone seems breathing mournfulness or glee,  
E'en as our hearts may be.

Thomson names

the first note the hollow cuckoo sings,  
'the symphony of spring.'

Not all the poets, however, have been thus favourably disposed towards our minstrel. A superstition was afloat in Chaucer's days, that somewhat marred its music. 'Tossing,' he says,

lately on a sleepless bed,  
I of a token thought which lovers heed:  
How among them it was a common tale,  
That it was good to hear the nightingale  
Ere the vile cuckoo's note be uttered.

And, alas! Milton re-echoed the slander—

The liquid notes that close the eye of day,  
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,  
Portend success in love.

And Shakspeare—unkindest cut of all—makes his sweet Portia exclaim: 'He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo—by the *bad voice*.'

Probably this unfavourable opinion of the voice's influence in love affairs arose from the fact—which we cannot, in truth, conceal, and which everybody knows—that this viewless songster does not bear a good domestic character, but is one of those itinerant minstrels that literally 'feather their nests' at the expense of others. Left (still in the egg) a foundling in the nest of the hedge-sparrow or water-wagtail, and reared by the care of the poor deceived bird—over whom the parent cuckoo throws such a glamour, that though she would turn every other strange egg out of her nursery, she suffers that to remain—he has the ingratitude to eject his foster-brethren from the nest during the first twelve days of his existence; being at that period provided with a peculiar depression between the shoulders, in which he contrives to carry his co-mates to the edge of their dwelling, and toss them separately over, thus remaining sole possessor of the inheritance of others. There he dwells till the end of June or July, when his voice is no more heard in the land; and he takes his departure, to sing on the continent, or wherever else the golden sunbeams may inspire his lay. As popular singers generally leave their portrait behind them, it would be unjust to our cuckoo if we withheld his, especially as he is personally very little known. He is, then, somewhat less than a pigeon, shaped like a magpie, and of a grayish colour; and is distinguished from other birds by his round, prominent nostrils. When very young, his colour is brown, mixed with black.

The next voice—most welcome, sweetest, and best to our taste—that haunts the spring and makes day musical, is that of the lark.

Shrill-voiced and loud, the messenger of morn,  
Ere yet the shadows fly, he, mounted, sings  
Amid the dawning clouds.

Leaving beneath him his beloved and lowly home on earth, but never wandering in any other direction from the nest save heavenwards, this glorious musician soars high into the air; and from a veil of misty splendour, pours down such a volume of melody, so joy-inspiring and wonderful in its power and brilliancy, that it may well rival the lavishly-praised strains of the nightingale.

Bird of the wilderness,  
Blithesome and cumberless,  
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea!  
Emblem of happiness,  
Blest is thy dwelling-place—  
O to abide in the desert with thee!  
Wild is thy lay, and loud,  
Far in the dowy cloud,  
Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.  
Where, on thy dewy wing,  
Where art thou journeying?  
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and fountain sheen,  
O'er moor and mountain green,  
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,  
Over the cloudlet dim,  
Over the rainbow's rim,  
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!  
Then, when the gloaming comes,  
Low in the heather blooms  
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!  
Emblem of happiness,  
Blest is thy dwelling-place—  
O to abide in the desert with thee!

Emblem of happiness, Hogg truly says it is, the voice that sings at the portals of the golden sky its grateful hymn of contentment—the lowliest dweller on the green-sward, the loftiest soarer skywards. There is a sweet cheerful lesson to be learned from that voice in the air—one of contentment, light-heartedness, and gratitude. And what bird has so good a right to sing 'at heaven's gate' in the sunny sky, as this gentlest and truest of birds? that never wanders from its nest and its native land, but dwells ever among us, making the very clouds musical during spring, summer, and autumn; and gathering together, in the silence and gloom of winter, in friendly flocks, when its song forsakes it, and it is too often destroyed to supply the table of the luxurious. Nor, whilst speaking of this charming songster, may we forget his kindred bird, the woodlark, for his song also is very sweet, when he warbles in the choruses of spring. Less brilliant than that of the lark, it has greater softness and tenderness; and after sunset, when his sun-worshipping cousin has sunk in gentle silence on his grass-sheltered nest, the woodlark, perched on the largest branch of some neighbouring tree, and looking down on his nest, which is placed beneath the shelter of a maythorn-hedge, or hidden by rank grass and gigantic dock-leaves, trills a placid and soothing lullaby. Listen to it, gentle reader; it is a meet preparative for quiet and peaceful slumbers. A little later, when the moon has risen, and all is hushed and quiet, you will hear the song of her who sings when 'your spirits are attentive'—the bird of night. It is best to listen in the mood and scene described by Keble,

If, the quiet brooklet leaving,  
Up the stony vale you wind,  
Haply half in fancy grieving  
For the shades you leave behind,  
By the dusty wayside drear,  
Nightingales with joyous cheer  
Sing, our sadness to reprove,  
Gladlier than in cultured grove.

Where the thickest boughs are twining,  
Of the greenest, darkest tree,  
There they plunge, the light declining;  
All may hear, but none may see.  
Fearless of the passing hoof,  
Hardly will they fleet aloof,  
So they live in modest ways,  
Trust entire and ceaseless praise.

The nightingale is, like her adversary in good or bad omens, a wandering minstrel, singing, in England, only from April till August—a bird of the season in every respect—nature's prima donna, well known and universally admired. It is almost needless to remind the reader of Burns's many sweet references to the songsters of the woodland and lea. What more charming than the lyric—

O stay, sweet warbling woodlark, stay!  
Nor quit for me the trembling spray;  
A hapless lover courts thy lay—  
Thy soothing, fond complaining.

Thou tells o' never-ending care,  
O' speechless grief, and dark despair;  
For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair,  
Or my poor heart is broken.

The woodlark seems to have been a great favourite with Burns:

It is Maria's voice I hear!  
So calls the woodlark in the grove,  
His little faithful mate to cheer;  
At once 'tis music and 'tis love.

The mavis, or thrush, however, is the bird *par excellence* of Scottish song, and not without reason; for his piping, clear and beautiful, sends a thrill of pleasure through the heart.

Merry it is in the good greenwood,  
When the mavis and merle are singing!

When the light sparkles and dances through leaves of tender green, and there is still freshness enough in the air to give a zest to walking, then, in the thickest of the mossy dingle, from yonder silver fir, comes one of the sweetest voices of the spring. It is that of the mavis or song-thrush; rich, deep, and varied are the tones; and, hark! there rises the note of another bird of the same species, but it differs from the first: you may tell them apart, and choose between their musical conceptions. It is the peculiarity of the song-thrush, that, while other birds of the same name sing, like Helena and Hermia, one song, all in one key, it has no regular and hereditary lay, but ever pipes a voluntary of its own. 'Their voices'—we quote from the *Journal of a Naturalist*—'may always be distinguished amid the choristers of the copse, yet some one performer will more particularly engage attention by a peculiar modulation or tune; few or none preserve the same round of notes, whatever is uttered seeming the effusion of the moment.' The note is less liquid and soft than that of the woodlark and linnet; nay, it is at times a little harsh, strained, and tense, but it delights from its infinite variety.

The thrush is a resident musician, and builds a very curious nest, to which, if he promised not to harm it, we would direct the reader's attention. Grahame, in his *Song-birds of Scotland*, gives the following poetical account of its locality:—

In the hazel-bush or sloe, is formed  
The habitation of the wedded pair—  
Sometimes below the never-fading leaves  
Of ivy close, that overtwisting binds,  
And richly crowns, with clustered fruit of spring,  
Some river rock, or nodding castle wall;  
Sometimes beneath the jutting root of elm  
Or oak, among the sprigs, that overhang  
A pebble-chiding stream, the loam-lined house  
Is fixed, well hid from ken of hovering hawk,  
Or lurking beast, or school-boy's prowling eyes.

In England, however, the thrush's nest is not lined with loam, but with slips of rotten wood, chiefly willow, firmly glued together with a salivary cement. It is as large, as round, and nearly as smooth as a breakfast-cup, and well worth inspection.—But we are wandering from our subject.—The voice of the merle or black-bird is infinitely more mellow than that of the thrush, but it has much less variety, compass, and execution; still, its whistle is full of power and sweetness in the spring, though best heard at a distance. It is a shy and restless bird, much alone, and fond apparently of solitude.

The black-cap, called in Norfolk the mock-nightingale, from the resemblance of its song to Philomela's, is another of our spring musicians. Its airs are light and easy, and consist of a succession of modulations of small compass, sweet, flexible, and blended; but it sings, in snatches, wild fragments of song. It is a very Coleridge among birds, seldom satisfying the ear that craves for more; yet, when a quiet fit calms its volatile temperament, it will sit gravely on a bush, and utter such sweet inward melody with such variety of gentle modulation, that one feels chained to the spot. The wren, that

Hath her nest at the foot of a tree,

has also a loud voice. Indeed, the vocal power of these diminutive musicians has often excited astonishment; but if we remember that the lungs of birds, unlike those of beasts, which are confined to one spot, are, in a measure, extended through their whole bodies, and that their skin is also full of cells, which take in the air continually, the wonder will be somewhat diminished.

All these melodious voices proceed from birds which are distinguished by the name of soft-billed: there are others which also make the spring vocal, called hard-billed. These are chiefly the goldfinch, bullfinch, and linnet. The first makes his enchanting tones heard from the earliest bursting of a leaf; and has so good an ear, that he is capable of instruction, and learns to improve his song by listening to the nightingale. He is a clever bird, capable of being taught amusing tricks when caged and properly trained, like the canary and the bullfinch. Thomson, enumerating the voices of the spring, says of this latter bird:—

The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove.

But the epithet 'mellow' is scarcely deserved, in our opinion, by the bullfinch in his wild state. He has then only three cries, and they are not very pleasant; but he can be taught to pipe many tunes, and even to articulate words and sentences. He is a tender, loving bird, capable of strong personal attachment. The same may be said of the linnet, which become so attached, as to be troublesomely caressing; and like the goldfinch and bullfinch, they have a flexibility of throat that enables them to imitate different airs with facility. The linnet can be taught to utter words, and will adopt and unite with its own modulations the strains

of other birds which it is in the habit of hearing. A young linnet brought up with a chaffinch, a lark, or a nightingale, will sing like it. Thus nature atones for the inferiority of the bird in originality, by giving it greater imitative powers; but even all untaught and wild, their notes are very charming. Wordsworth thus apostrophises the green linnet:—

One have I marked, the happiest guest  
In all this covert of the blest:  
Hail to thee! far above the rest  
In joy of voice and pinion!  
Thou linnet, in thy green array,  
Presiding spirit here to-day,  
Dost lead the revels of the May,  
And this is thy dominion.

These singers are residents in Britain; in winter, however, they descend to the sea-coasts, where they continue till spring again demands their music in the greenwood.

But let us not forget the dear familiar voice, which is as that of a friend to every one of us—the note of 'God Almighty's bird,' as the peasantry call the robin. It is so celebrated for its virtues, that we are apt to forget and overlook its great musical powers: moreover, it is social and humble; it sings beside our daily paths, and, like many another everyday blessing, is too lightly estimated for the very cause that should win it fame. The poet Goldsmith loved it, and thus described its song; we will not wrong our dear robin by lauding it in less eloquent words:—'The note of other birds,' he says, 'is louder, and their inflections more capricious, but this bird's voice is soft, tender, and well supported, and the more to be valued, as we enjoy it the greatest part of the winter. If the nightingale's voice has been compared to the fiddle, the redbreast's voice has all the delicacy of the flute.'

Stay, little cheerful robin, stay,  
And at my casement sing;  
Though it should prove a farewell lay,  
And this our parting spring.

Though I, alas! may ne'er enjoy  
The promise in thy song—  
A charm that thought cannot destroy,  
Doth to thy strain belong.

Methinks that in my dying hour  
Thy song would still be dear,  
And with a more than earthly power  
My passing spirit cheer.

Then, little bird, this boon confer;  
Come, and my requiem sing;  
Nor fail to be the harbinger  
Of everlasting spring.

Thus sang Wordsworth, when, on a sick-bed, he listened to the spring-voice of the redbreast.

Joined to these  
Innumerable songsters in the freshening shade  
Of new spring leaves, their modulations mix  
Mellifluous—the jay, the rook, the daw;  
And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,  
Aid the full concert; while the stock-dove breathes  
A melancholy murmur through the whole.

And spring has still other voices: soft whispering winds; the hum of bees and buzz of insects; the rustling of leaves; the bleating of lambs; the soft trickling of long-frozen rivulets. The earth is full of harmony, the air full of tongues. Go forth and listen; bid the harsh sounds of the world be still for a time, and give thine ear to the gentle voices of nature. They have a language of their own, which speaks to man of another and eternal spring, and wakes in his

heart pure aspirations and holy thoughts, meet to soothe his weary pilgrimage, and aid him in the path of the eternal progress.

Go forth, and learn the meaning of the Voices of the Spring!

#### REVIVAL OF OIL-ANOINTING.

PROFESSOR SIMPSON of Edinburgh has been the means of bringing to light a curious corroboration of the sanitary value of the ancient practice of anointing with oil. It appears that the learned professor, when recently visiting the manufacturing town of Galashiels, was casually informed that the workers in the wool-mill in that place were exempt from the attacks of consumption and scrofula. On inquiring of the medical men in the vicinity, the truth of the statement was confirmed; and it was then deemed expedient to pursue investigation on a broader scale. Communications were accordingly sent to physicians residing in Dunfermline, Alloa, Tillicoultry, Inverness, and other districts where wool-mills are in operation; and in the case of all, it was ascertained that similar immunity was enjoyed from the fatal diseases mentioned. It further appeared that, in some of the localities, scarletina had to be added to the list; and also, that employment in the mills not only preserved health, but children of delicate constitutions were sent to be wool-workers for the express purpose of acquiring strength, a result in almost every instance attained.

The question now came to be, to ascertain the precise cause of this singular result of mill-work. Cotton-mills did not produce a similar effect, and workmen in certain departments of wool-mills were found to be subject to the ordinary maladies of the country; it therefore soon became evident, that the cause was referrible to the great quantity of oil consumed in the preparation of the raw material in wool-working. A coat or any other portion of dress, when hung up in one of the rooms, was found to be saturated with oil in a few days; and the operatives must, therefore, be held to draw into their system a large amount of oleaginous matter, either by inhalation or by absorption from the clothes through the skin, the latter being probably the principal mode in which the substance is imbibed. The hands and face of the workers are constantly besmeared, but under their clothing there are scarcely any marks of discoloration, although it is obvious that the oil must be received through all the pores of the body, and, indeed, the greatest quantity will penetrate where there is the least facility for external evaporation.

The application of this discovery to practical medicine is calculated to be of important service, in so far as some of our most serious maladies are concerned. Consumption, as now understood, is supposed to arise from defective nutrition—there being in consumptive and scrofulous subjects a deficiency of fatty as compared with albuminous matter; and to restore the equilibrium of the two elements, cod-oil, as is well known, has been in extensive use for the last ten or twelve years, and with singular effect. In many instances, however, oil when swallowed is found to excite nausea; and in such cases, the introduction of this saving agent by external application is likely to be productive of beneficial consequences. Means are to be taken to get rid of the disagreeable odour of the cod-oil, and when freed from this objection, there can be few or no drawbacks to the ancient custom of anointing. That it adds rapidly to the weight of the emaciated, has already been proved by actual experiment; and one instance may be mentioned of an individual who gained a stone in weight in the short period of four weeks. The use of oil in this way is not disagreeable, but, on the contrary, is found to be productive of pleasant sensations. It has only to be added, so far as the medical action is involved, that the mode in which the oil strengthens

delicate patients, is by its being received into the blood, the chemical character of which undergoes a vital change by the process.

If anointing should come into fashion, it will be merely a return to the customs of the olden time. 'The Jews,' says Dr Cox in his *Biblical Antiquities* (p. 155), 'addicted themselves to anointing, which consisted either of simple oil or such as had aromatic spices infused. They applied ointments chiefly to those parts of the body which were most exposed to the atmosphere, by which means they were considerably secured against its changes and inclemencies.' The allusions to anointing with oil, not only the head and beard, but the feet and other portions of the person, are well-known features in Bible narrative.

Homer makes frequent mention of oil in connection with the bath; and when Ulysses enters the palace of Circe, we are told that after the use of the bath, he was anointed with costly perfumes. Passing down to later times, it is a very significant fact, that consumption is rarely if ever alluded to by medical writers among the Greeks and Romans; and it is all but certain, that the rarity of the distemper is attributable to the constant external use of oil. In the matters of bathing and anointing, they imitated the example of the Greeks; and attached to each Roman bathing-establishment was an *unctuarium*, 'where,' says Dr Adam, 'the visitors were anointed all over with a coarse cheap oil before they began their exercise. Here the finer odoriferous ointments which were used in coming out of the bath were also kept; and the room was so situated as to receive a considerable degree of heat. This chamber of perfumes was quite full of pots, like an apothecary's shop; and those who wished to anoint and perfume the body, received perfumes and unguents.' In larger bathing-establishments, the *eleothesium* was filled with an immense number of vases; and the extent to which oiling and perfuming were practised by the Romans, may be judged by the following reference to the ingredients employed:

—'The vases contained perfumes and balsams—very different in their compositions, according to the different tastes of the persons who anointed themselves. The rhodinum, one of those liquid perfumes, was composed of roses; the lirinum, of lily; eyprinum, of the flower of a tree called cypria, which is believed to be the same as the privet; baccarinum, from the foxglove; myrrhinum was composed of myrrh. Oils were extracted from sweet marjoram, lavender, and the wild vine—from the iris, ben, and wild thyme. The last three were employed for rubbing the eyebrows, hair, neck, and head; the arms were rubbed with the oil of sisymbrium, or water-mint; and the muscles with the oil of anarcum, and others which have been mentioned.' After anointing, the bathers passed into the *spharisterium*—a very light and extensive apartment, in which were performed the many kinds of exercises to which this third part of the baths was appropriated; of these, the most favourite was the ball. After exercise, recourse was a second time had to the warm-bath—the body was then scraped with instruments called strigils, most usually of bronze, but sometimes of iron; perfumed oil of the most delicate kind was then administered anew; and the process of lustration was complete.

Let it be remarked, that a considerable amount of friction was used by the ancients when the oil was rubbed in; and also that exercise of an exciting and laborious kind followed the unctuous manipulation. In like manner, the wool-workers are in motion throughout the whole day; and from the return they receive for their daily labour, it is not probable that they have it in their power to indulge in those dietetic luxuries or excesses which create dyspepsia in other circles. The inference is, that exercise must go hand in hand with the oil, and that other physiological



conditions must be strictly preserved, before anointing can certainly be depended on for conferring its full tale of benefit on humanity. There may, indeed, be frequent instances of persons benefiting by external application when all other aids fail in making the least impression; but in ordinary cases, the safe course for all who can command sufficient air and exercise, is to regard anointing as an adjuvant, not as a specific—an element of cure, but not as constituting the entire cure.

There is a certain class of people to whom this practice may be peculiarly serviceable—those who are disagreeably or injuriously affected by easterly winds, especially the gouty or rheumatic. The east is known to be a dry wind, and never, except in very stormy weather, is it accompanied by rain. After a continuance of this wind, the leaves of plants become dry and shrivelled, evidently suffering from want of moisture. Now, without presuming to propound any medical theory, we may suggest, that it is just possible the east wind may in some measure produce its disagreeable influence on the human system by parching and drying up the skin; and in this view, anointing, by acting as a lubricant, may go far to counteract the baneful influence. At anyrate, it is easy to try the question, if it is supposed to be worth trying, by experiment.

As to the kind of oil—that of the cod appears to be the strongest; and if it could be divested of its infamous odour, it probably would be the best. But some authorities are of opinion, that any kind of emollient is suitable: in this view a wide range of selection, founded even on the basis of Roman ingredients, is open for use; and when to these are added the discoveries of modern chemistry, it is evident that the most fastidious may have their tastes gratified. Friction of itself has always been regarded as of great therapeutic value; and the harder the rubbing with oil, the more beneficial will be the result. If the body has need of oleaginous aliment, it will absorb it as greedily as the parched earth drinks in rain after a season of drought. In the experiments we have ourselves instituted, the body, when rubbed at night, shews no traces of lubrication in the morning, and the sleeping-dress is little if at all affected. Careful housewives may be alarmed for their napery, but, with ordinary attention, there is little danger; and even supposing there were some trifling inconveniences, the benefit expected may surely be esteemed a fair equivalent.

#### THE LITTLE HEIRESS OF THE QUARTER.

'SHE does credit to the quarter,' said Mère Poulain, the dealer in green-grocery, to Père Creton, the pork-butcher, who replied by an affirmative grunt.

The subject of this neighbourly dialogue was Made-moiselle Annette Dufour, a little milliner, who occupied a single room on the fifth story of the pork-butcher's house. It is not often that a young girl living alone thus wins the suffrages of her neighbours, especially when these neighbours are an old bachelor and an old maid, notorious throughout the whole quarter for their gossiping propensities.

Having used the word quarter twice, it is necessary to define the meaning it bears in ordinary conversation in Paris. It means neither more nor less than a small portion of a street, often consisting of only two or three tenements, in which the porters, small tradesmen, and less aristocratic lodgers, are either friends or enemies, or at least under the constant observation of one circle of active gossips. A crossing generally cuts off all communication between these little societies, except, perhaps, in the case of the corner houses, which mutually observe each other, and play a kind of four-handed game all to themselves. Scandal always traverses the street, ventures to slink past a dead-wall, a public

monument, a sentry-box, or even a row of demure shops, vending articles not of absolute necessity in everyday life. A dealer in Chinese curiosities is a more impassable barrier than the Chinese Wall.

The quarter of which we mean to speak is a section of the Rue des Anges Gardiens. It is bounded on the south by the Rue Jacob running at right angles, and on the north by the back-wall of the School of the Fine Arts and a small barrack. A wine-merchant, a milk-dealer, an apothecary, a tailor, a pork-butcher, a pastry-cook, a shoemaker, a hardwaresman, a stay-maker, a grocer, and other tradesmen occupy the front-ages. There is also what is called a Dutch Company, or inferior eating-house, and a café, generally innocent of customers. The inhabitants, therefore, need rarely go beyond their own limits, except in search of bread and meat. Some misanthropical and fastidious spirits among them, it is true, pretend that they are better served in more distant shops, or at the market, and are consequently set down as bad neighbours, and scandalised in the most unmerciful manner.

An attempt to analyse the inhabitants of the eight or ten great houses that form this quarter, would be exceedingly difficult. Lawyers, medical men, retired bourgeois, poor legitimists, foreigners, students, work-people, male and female, throng the numerous apartments and separate rooms from the *entresol* to the *mansarde*. The affairs of most of these folks are known in some distorted shape, through the medium of servants and porters, to the inveterate gossips of the quarter, and furnish them of course with endless matter of speculation. No man, it is said, is a hero to his valet-de-chambre. No family, we may add, can preserve a perfectly unspotted reputation when placed under the constant gaze of prying curiosity. Five or six old women industriously watching your windows, your doors, your goings in and comings out, questioning your servants, and calculating your outlay, will inevitably make you in the end the subject of romance or intrigue of some sort.

It is worth while to examine how Annette contrived to gain the approbation of Mère Poulain and her co-gossips. In the first place, on arriving in the quarter, she made a point of dealing at once in her small way with all the trades-people thereof. Under pretence of constant work, she spent very little time in her purchases, but still took occasion, in an unaffected manner, to tell everybody who and what she was, where she came from, and why she had left her last lodgings. Curiosity makes peace with those who seem to satisfy it. Annette, moreover, made especial acquaintance with no one, but allowed all her neighbours free admission into her room, where there was nothing to excite either envy or derision. Add to this, that there was something frank and winning in her manner; that she was not too pretty, and yet pleasing; that she paid her way tolerably well—and the mystery of her popularity is explained.

Annette lived, as we have said, on the fifth story, overlooking a little court-yard. Her window was adorned with flower-pots, and a cage, in which was an old canary, that sometimes deigned to sing. All day long, when the weather was fine, she sat working at this window, breathing the fresh air which came over the roof, and very seldom raising her eyes.

At such times, a full view of the interior of her chamber could be obtained from two of the windows on the opposite side of the narrow court-yard; that is to say, the one on a level with hers, and the one just above, on the sixth story. The lower window belonged to a young medical student, the upper to a working colourist; and from both, at various periods, different kinds of declarations had been made to Annette, who, however, thought proper not to pay attention to either.

Alexandre Majescat, the medical student, was an original fellow in his way. Little, but well made, he

was impressed with the profound belief that no woman could resist his piercing black eyes, and huge bushy beard. If pressed, indeed, in conversation, he would admit that he was irresistible. Two or three days after Annette's arrival, he saw her working at her window; and taking a fancy immediately to her fresh cheerful face, leaned out, and cried: 'Good-morning, my little neighbour. Is it you that has succeeded the drummer Robert?' She nodded assent. 'Very glad to hear it. He was an ugly fellow, with red whiskers: you are a pretty girl, with red hair—no, it is not red, but auburn. Is not your hair auburn, my little neighbour?'

To have noticed this question, would have been to establish an intimacy at once. Annette pretended not to hear, and went away from the window. But Majescat was not to be rebutted; he liked flirtation on the long-range system, and whenever he saw his little neighbour at work, bawled out some salutation or compliment, to which she replied or not, as her humour prompted, but never in a way that might be construed into encouragement. When she was very inattentive, the swarthy student would endeavour to force her to look in his direction by cutting extraordinary capers, dancing round his room, declaiming speeches from Racine, or singing vociferously; and when she involuntarily cast her eyes that way, he would either bow and smirk, or make hideous faces. At first, all this was rather amusing, and Annette used to retreat into a cupboard, that she might laugh without being heard; but in the course of a month or two, Majescat began to be considered a terrible bore.

Auguste Marechal, the colourist, a tall, pale young man, with soft blue eyes, went about his courtship in a different way. He began by looking very intently at the little milliner, in hope that at length her glances might meet. Perhaps he had read of serpents and cats bringing down tom-tits with the 'artillery of their eyes.' However, this system of fascination produced no results; so he took to buying little bouquets, which he launched with a dexterous hand into his lady's lap, and then hid himself behind his curtain. At first, Annette thought that these missiles came from Majescat's room, and threw them away in a very marked manner; but on discovering the truth, was about merely to lay them on the window-sill, when she reflected that this change of conduct would be a decided encouragement; so, as often as the bouquets came down, they went into the court-yard, to be torn to pieces by the dogs and children that played there. Auguste at length grew weary of this mode of shewing his affection, especially as it was an expensive one, and resumed his original system of staring. In this manner he lost a great deal of time, and found that his week's gains did not cover his week's expenses. By gazing too much upon a star, he fell into—debt.

Several months passed, Annette's reputation increasing in the quarter, and the two young men making no progress in their addresses. Majescat, it is true, as the bolder and more idle, had lain in wait for the little milliner at the porter's lodge, and exchanged some words with her. But she obstinately refused all his offers of *petits-verres* of 'something sweet,' of tarts at the pastry-cook's, of breakfasts at the café, of dinners at the restaurant, of evenings at the theatre, and of days in the country! The poor girl did hesitate for a moment, we must confess, before she declined this last delightful proposal. An excursion to the country, to St Germain, Montmorency, or Meudon, has an almost irresistible attraction for a Parisian grisette; but it is expensive, and to be complete, requires the arm of a cavalier. How many in her place would have subscribed to all necessary conditions! But she closed her ears to the seductive speeches of the gay Majescat, and audaciously asserted, that she did not like the country.

'That girl is a dragon, a myth, and a mystery,' would the medical student mutter, as, after exchanging as few words as politeness required, Annette would trip away with the bandbox in which she was carrying back her work; but the obstacles he encountered, so far from discouraging, only served to excite him; and he became so wholly absorbed in his pursuit, that he remained every day, and all day, watching the motions of the little milliner, never leaving his room until she shewed signs of going out, and then running down to waylay her in the alley. By degrees, he fancied himself really in love with her; and once, in a desperate mood, wrote half a sonnet to her eyebrow.

In process of time this enamoured wight discovered, no matter how, that the colourist was his rival, and nothing could exceed thereupon his rage and mortification. One morning, Annette, yielding to a kind of fascination—for she knew that Auguste's eyes were constantly fixed upon her—could not refrain from looking up at him. Majescat caught the glance, and instantly shouted out: 'Ah, traitress, you are betraying me! I saw you wink at him!' And leaning over his window, he cried still louder: 'I give formal notice, that I will kill, murder, assassinate, flay alive any man or boy who dares to stand betwixt me and my adored Annette!' All the people in the house were instantly at their windows, and the poor milliner was fain to take refuge behind her curtains. Auguste, though no hero, felt it incumbent on him to reply: 'And I am ready to kick, and pull the nose of whoever insults that charming creature!' Majescat did not seem inclined, for the present, to carry out his murderous intentions, but contented himself with shaking his fist at his own ceiling, and going through the pantomime of cutting up Auguste with a large dissecting-knife. The colourist, on his part, seeing that no dreadful consequences ensued from his audacity, grew furious—stamped fiercely about the room, kicked an imaginary rival out of the window; and so the matter ended.

From that time forward, Annette's window remained closed, and her curtains drawn. The poor child, who worked from morning until night, was now deprived of fresh air, except during her rare walks; and the neighbours noticed that the freshness of her cheeks gradually faded. She did not complain, however, but lived courageously on, maintained by hope of better times.

We do not know how much exactly Annette gained per diem; she herself did not know. Sometimes she was in full work; sometimes she had no work at all; but rarely did a flash of good-fortune make her deviate into the most trifling extravagance; for now, at the end of every three months, she was under the dire necessity of collecting the sum of thirty francs for her rent. It was not always she could succeed, in spite of nights spent at her needle; and sometimes, therefore, she had to go and beg a delay, and tell her little story to soften the heart of her severe landlord. Her expenses were not great—far from it. Three sous of bread for her day's consumption; two sous of milk and one sou of coffee in the morning; vegetables and salad, to the amount of about four sous, for her dinner; once a week the *pot-au-feu*, costing a franc, and furnishing boiled beef for three days, and broth in cold weather for four or five; a quart of ten-sou wine now and then. Such were her requirements in the shape of food; and from this it may be inferred that she had rather a good appetite. Twice a year she bought a new gown, one for summer, and one for winter; and whenever she could afford it, a handsome cap, which she trimmed with her own hands. For great occasions, which rarely or never occurred, she actually had a bonnet and a muff; but the first was out of fashion, and the second very much moth-eaten. From the time when she first made her appearance in the quarter, no person came to see her

except one old lady, whom she stated to the inquisitive to be her aunt, established at Issy. To observations that this lady appeared to be well dressed, she replied that she was *très bien* (very well)—meaning, that her fortune was comfortable.

Both Majescat and Auguste would probably have been in despair from the outset, had they known in what Annette's hope consisted. It was in the somewhat precarious love of a young soldier at that time serving in the Algerian army. On all other subjects she had been communicative, but on this had preserved a complete silence. As no letters ever came to her address—the aunt being the medium of correspondence—the truth was never suspected; and the gossips of the quarter often wondered that so nice a girl had not 'somebody,' as the phrase goes. 'The fact is,' said Père Creton, the pork-butcher, with indifference, 'Annette is not pretty enough, and too poor to attract any one for the serious motive; and she is too prudent to listen to the first young fellow who may talk nonsense to her.' But in the secret depths of his own mind, the pork-butcher had often thought that if he were old enough to marry—he was barely fifty—Annette would make a charming ornament for his counter, and would attract customers by the inimitable grace with which she would weigh sausages and carve ham. It was even probable, if fate had not ordered matters otherwise, that before he became quite decrepit, he would have offered his fat hand and corpulent person to the little milliner. In the meantime, he stared at her as she passed, gave her the full worth of her money, and bought her a magnificent geranium at the St Anne—her patron saint's day.

A fierce war had at length been declared between Auguste and Majescat. The latter thinking that the former might be the favoured lover, began operations by blowing fine dust through the colourist's keyhole, in order to injure his prints; the former retorted by dancing an insane polka every morning at three o'clock over the student's head. Majescat next nailed up his enemy's door; Auguste threw a dead cat through his rival's window. At length they came to words and shaking of fists one at the other, but no practical result ensued; and the heroic challenges interchanged served only to amuse poor Annette, who overheard them behind her impenetrable curtain.

One morning the postman came to the porter's lodge, asked if Mademoiselle Annette Dufour lived there, and on receiving an affirmative reply, left a large important-looking letter from Bordeaux. In the natural course of things, this letter ought immediately to have been taken up stairs to its address; but after it had been turned round and round, and examined and peeped into unsuccessfully at the lodge, it was taken to the pork-butcher's shop, and well greased by M. Creton's fat hands; then it was carried under an apron to Mère Poulain, who also left the mark of her thumbs; and so it went round the quarter, until the address was rendered nearly illegible. No reasonable guess at its contents having been made, somebody suggested that it ought forthwith to be carried to Mademoiselle Annette herself, and that the portress ought not to leave the room until it was opened and read.

Annette seemed surprised at receiving the letter, thanked the portress, but laid it down on her work-table without breaking the seal. She was very busy sewing on the delicate fringe of a satin cape, and affected at least to be in too great a hurry to leave off her work. The portress was in a fever of curiosity, fidgeted about the room, made a variety of observations, and at length said: 'Are you not eager to know what that letter contains?' 'Not particularly,' said Annette, endeavouring to look unconcerned, though her little fingers really trembled with excitement. She was determined, however, to keep her correspondence to herself, and waited full ten minutes, until the portress, hearing herself called, flounced away in a state

of great indignation, muttering, that 'she was sure she did not want to pry into other people's affairs.' In ten minutes afterwards, it was decided in a full conclave of gossips, held in Mère Poulain's shop, that Annette was proud and conceited, and that everybody had been very much mistaken in her character. The old dame, indeed, had the audacity to suggest, that she had previously formed this opinion, and had hinted it more than once; but she was immediately put down as an impertinent pretender to superior wisdom.

The little milliner, meanwhile, had opened her letter, and found that it was from a solicitor of Bordeaux, informing her that her grandmother was dead, and requesting her to send him legal authority to sell what property existed, in order that the proceeds might be divided amongst the several heirs. It would be useless to insinuate that Annette dropped more than one tear to the memory of an old lady whom she did not remember to have ever seen, or that she was not delighted at the prospect of an inheritance which would enable her to bring something like a dowry to Sergeant Jacques Coustand, her affianced. Without delay she put on her best gown and her prettiest cap, and went down to Mère Poulain's, to ask the address of a lawyer, and to state generally the news she had received. It was too late to re-establish her popularity—that was gone for ever—but she furnished matter for an ocean of small-talk. Before she had been a quarter of an hour in the office of M. Simon, a fresh session of the gossips had been held and dissolved; and the news spread like wildfire through the whole quarter, that Annette, the conceited little milliner, had inherited a portion of one hundred thousand francs (L4000), neither more nor less.

Who were more astounded and excited by this intelligence than Auguste and Majescat? Both blamed themselves severely for not having carried on their courtship in a more effective manner, and made fierce resolves to pick a quarrel with all rivals. The student, not long after he had heard that Annette was an heiress, leaned out of his window, and shouted to Auguste, that if he made so much noise overhead at night, he should be obliged to complain to the landlord, and get his warning sent in. The colourist, who was behind-hand with his rent, felt this threat acutely, but bravely retorted, that Majescat might do his worst, under peril, nevertheless, of being soundly kicked.

'Do you mean to threaten me, fellow?' shouted the student, looking up.

'Of course I do, cur,' replied the colourist, looking down.

'Shall I come up to you?'

'Do, if you dare.'

Similar dialogues had often before occurred without consequences; but on this occasion Majescat's blood was up, and, thrusting out a fishing-rod, he made a desperate hit at his rival's head. The colourist seized the rod, and both began tugging away with such fury, that one or both would probably have been precipitated into the court-yard below, had not a soft, half-suppressed laugh attracted their attention. Annette was looking between her curtains, enjoying the scene with good-humoured malice. The two rivals felt ashamed, and each shrank out of sight, to meditate the plan of a decisive assault on the young milliner's heart. As both let go the fishing-rod at the same time, it fell down into the court, broke three panes of glass, frightened four old ladies, and narrowly escaped killing five children. The consequence was a formal complaint to the landlord, and a formal notice to quit to both the combatants.

Next day, the projects of our suitors were matured, and they set about executing them. Majescat could think of nothing better than a visit in person, with his fascinating eyes and irresistible beard. He found Annette at her work. She seemed surprised and



frightened at seeing him; but mustered up courage to ask in an off-hand manner what he wanted. He made his declaration forthwith, enlarged on the excellence of his worldly prospects, hinted at the charm of his exterior, and ended by a positive offer of his hand and heart. In romance, the answer to this speech would be an indignant refusal, and a request to 'leave the room;' but Annette was not made of such obdurate stuff. She had been more than six years separated from her Jacques, and had recently heard from him but rarely. Not knowing the reports that had been circulated as to her wealth, she could not but feel a little agitated at this rare occurrence in the life of a Parisian grisette—a real *bona-fide* offer of marriage, calling up visions of white dresses and veils, orange-flower blossoms, the *mairie*, the church; things and places but seldom visiting even the dreams of these 'female bachelors,' as they call themselves. Jacques had better make haste: his honest face begins to grow dim at the end of that long tunnel—six years of a young girl's life, from sixteen to twenty-two. I am very much afraid he would not have been satisfied could he have seen into Annette's heart at that moment.

Not that she had any positive idea of accepting Majescat. Students are never looked upon as marrying men. They are passible lovers, but very impassible husbands. Besides, the vulgar joviality, the ridiculous pranks, and off-hand courtship of this young fellow, however successful they might have been with others, had not exactly won her heart. It must not be supposed, however, that she looked on all those things with the eyes of a fastidious fine lady. Though Majescat had made himself a bore, he was admitted to be a pretty fellow, who might work out into something tolerable—in case Jacques proved faithless. It would be wiser and more maidenly, without precisely giving him hopes, not to discourage him altogether; and so, after half an hour's conversation, Majescat was dismissed, very much puzzled to determine whether he had been successful or ridiculous.

An hour afterwards, a long letter came from the colourist. It was sensibly written, contained an apparently sincere expression of attachment, and held out a prospect to Annette of a comfortable life as the partner of an honest working-man. An ordinary grisette—whose chief characteristics are love of dress, of pleasure, and especially of good eating—would have turned back with contempt from this humble offer to the more brilliant expectations suggested by Majescat. But Annette had very just notions on the subject of marriage, and balanced carefully the two chances of happiness thus held out to her—though, in reality, she had no idea at the time of accepting either. A very equivocal shake of the head from her window, was the only answer she made to the eager inquiries of a pair of gentle blue eyes that gazed at her as she read the letter.

Annette was pensive all the rest of that day. Dismissing for the present all reflection on the particular claims of those two suitors, she thought very seriously, as she had already more than once done, on her lonely life, on the dangers by which it was surrounded, on the precarious condition of her health and reputation. The solitude in which she had cheerfully passed so many long years, began to frighten her. She discovered that it was not good to be alone; that many functions of her being had remained too long unemployed; that many of her feelings, even sentiments, had been too long ruthlessly crushed under the weight of a first engagement that might never be destined to be fulfilled; and with an exaggeration natural to youth, she wept over the loss of her best years. Make haste, make haste, Jacques, or the sunflower will have turned to another god!

It is not so difficult as some suppose to suppress the warmer passions, but then they must be kept in a uniform state of subjection. Annette, with her mind constantly

fixed upon one object, impelled by it as a motive to work by day, and amused by it in her dreams at night, had carried forward into the full bloom of womanhood all the pure aspirations, the chaste ambitions, the pretty fancies of the girl. For six long years she had played with her love as with a doll; had dressed it in sham toilets, fed it with sham food, and put it in a sham bed in a sham house. This could not last for ever. Jacques may say it might have lasted a month or so longer; but there would be no mystery or uncertainty in human life, if all things went on in this proper convenient manner. Jacques, Jacques! it is quite miraculous enough that the snow has lain upon the ground even to the old age of spring. Make haste, then, for the golden feet of the sun are travelling towards it, and it must thaw at last.

Jacques is a wise man, that is evident. These thoughts seem to have struck him; and for the first time he has asked for leave of absence. He need not return, for his service will be over before the leave has expired. With some compunction already on his mind, he hurries away from Temecen, and hastens to the coast. Anxiety increases within him as he proceeds; it gives him a respectable shaking during the passage of the Mediterranean, and works him into a fever on the way from Marseille to Paris. This is what is called poetical justice. Jacques is expiating six years of ineffable satisfaction with himself; of cool, calm confidence in the inviolable promise of a child to whom it was almost a crime in him to speak of love; of jolly camp-life under a rainbow of hope which never paled or trembled in the heaven of his fancy, but which rested its base on the future with the same marble firmness that it rested on the past; he is expiating the little episode of the Arab maiden, the passionate courtship of the Spanish widow, and a whole host of petty flirtations, which he hopes will never reach Annette's ears.

Annette had at length received intelligence, that her 'fortune' consisted of 1000 francs in cash, and a third share of 550 francs a year in a little piece of landed property. She had by this time almost made up her mind to put a stop to the addresses of Messrs Majescat and Auguste; partly perhaps because although they talked of fighting, they did not do so, partly because she suspected their mercenary motives. But the leisure in which her little piece of good-fortune allowed her for awhile to indulge, had done M. Jacques a great deal of damage. In looking over his letters she found few protestations of love, few delicate expressions of attachment. It seemed to her, that he regarded her as a piece of property which he had irrevocably acquired, and she resolved, in answering his next letter, to let him see that she still was her own mistress, and well aware—here she glanced at a large new mirror—of her value.

She was indeed a charming little thing, though many would not have called her beautiful. Her bright eyes, fresh complexion, white teeth, rosy lips, and immense knot of glossy auburn hair, were perhaps even less attractive than that full, firm form which no corset ever confined, and which drove to despair the fine ladies for whom she worked. Positively, Jacques is a happy man if he arrive in time.

He came at last; and as he scrambled up the staircase, all his anxiety vanished, and he thought he was on the very brink of paradise. What was his surprise, when he found himself received as a perfect stranger by a beauty whom he scarcely recognised! They had to descend to minute explanations and proofs of identity. The golden moment had passed by the time this necessary duty was performed; and they sat down very sadly, and with apparent indifference to talk. Ah, Jacques, we think the rainbow must have planted its bright foot further on! This is not what you expected.

The truth was, that Annette, without exactly under-



standing her own feelings, was surprised and shocked by the sudden appearance of her old lover. He was so changed, too, from the smooth-faced modest youth, to the bearded and dashing soldier. She liked the second, perhaps, better than the first, but in a different way, and shrank from being claimed as *his* by that handsome stranger, of whom she knew nothing but the name. Why did he not come as a stranger without the passport of a promise, a lock of hair, and a piece of a broken ring given six years before in a balmy bouquet at Montmorency? By *Gis* and by *St Charity*! he would have carried the day at once; and the old stripling lover would have been put by in a cupboard with the broken dolls—almost his contemporaries—and the carefully-preserved veil of the first communion. If you had done this, Monsieur Jacques, you would have stolen your own sweetheart, and married her within six weeks.

Did Annette admit all these things to herself? We doubt it; but when Jacques, who came all fire and flame, had gone away, with a distant and awkward 'Good-day, mademoiselle,' she sat for a long time gazing at the door through which he had disappeared, trying to remember whether he had said that he would come again. Of course he would. Was he not her old affianced lover, though, to be sure, she had received him rather awkwardly? Naturally, she had felt it incumbent on her to shew a little pride, and to intimate that if, after all, she felt disposed to change her mind, why, there was nothing to prevent her. Jacques was a great rake, and must be kept at a distance. He came into her room as if he had been storming *Zaatcha*, or like a lion at the *Jardin des Plantes* rushing upon a lamb. To be sure, this was about the way in which she had dreamed of his return. Three weeks after he departed, when he already seemed to have been gone an age, she had been caught by her cousin clapping her hands, and rushing forward to leap on the neck of an imaginary Jacques. How coldly she had held out her hand! How cautiously she had shrunk back, for fear he might take the liberty of embracing her! Was that heartlessness? No; it was all on account of that frightful mustache and imperial, which made the once smooth-faced Jacques look so terribly dangerous. Next time she would be a little bolder. Next time! Supposing he was offended, and never came again. Such things had happened. People had thrown themselves into the river in despair before now. She started to her feet, and tried to persuade herself that Jacques had only been gone a minute. 'I will call him back; he must be lingering on the stairs,' she cried, blushing scarlet at the idea of a resumption of the interview under different auspices. There was a knock at the door. He may have come back! She sprang forward, and almost leaped into the arms of M. Alexandre Majescat! 'Come on! come on!' exclaimed that gentleman rather frantically, holding out his arms very wide. 'I know you do not expect me, tigress; but leap upon my breast, lacerate it with your pretty teeth. Upon my word, they are remarkably pretty when you smile.'

'I really did not expect to see you, sir, I confess. Indeed, I hope that for the future'—

'Then you admit the fact, and are prepared for the catastrophe?' shouted Majescat theatrically. 'I am ready for anything. Tell me only that he is preferred before me?'

'Certainly he is,' cried Annette pettishly, fearing that Jacques might return and find her tête-à-tête with this personage.

'The consequences be on your head. I am a desperate man—I am—but—one word more—oh, adored one!'

Majescat had retreated in his despair to the very head of the staircase, but when his more melting mood came over him, advanced again. Annette, fearing that she should not get rid of him, at once shut the door in his face, and bolted and double-locked it. The insult was too much to bear; and five minutes afterwards,

the little milliner saw, through her inscrutable curtain, the fiery student rush past the staircase window, and begin to batter the door of his supposed successful rival, the colourist. Jacques's visit had passed entirely unnoticed.

Leaving this quarrel to end as best it might, Annette turned again to a review of her own conduct, and, aided by the recollection of the manly countenance and dignified bearing of her lover, convinced herself that she had behaved like an ungrateful and hard-hearted hussy. 'He will never come back,' she said sobbing; 'no, never. He ought not to come back—I don't deserve it. I hope he will never come—it would serve me right.' A gentle rap came to the door. Her countenance was radiant at once. 'O gracious, it must be he!' The disappointment was excessive: it was only Auguste Marechal, smiling sily over an immense bouquet which he had brought all the way from the *Marché St Germain* as an excuse for a call. A little while previously, Annette would have received the visit with demure pleasure—a present of flowers always goes to the heart of a girl of her class—now, she was almost impertinent.

'I did not mean to offend you, mademoiselle,' said the mild colourist. 'Why should you refuse my bouquet?'

'I cannot take your bouquet, monsieur,' replied Annette, relenting at his gentleness: 'he would be jealous,' she added smiling.

'He!' Auguste clapped his hand wildly to his forehead, and rushed away, supposing of course that Majescat only could be meant. He soon got upon his own staircase, and began to butt madly upwards, determined to wreak his vengeance at once upon his fortunate rival. Majescat was lying in wait for him on the landing.

'You shall not escape me!' cried the latter.

'Depend upon it, you shall not!' exclaimed the former.

'Suborner!'

'Seducer!'

'Rogue!'

'Vagabond!'

'You have defrauded me of my happiness!'

'You have robbed me of my repose!'

Such is a brief outline of the dialogue which the excited couple interchanged as they stood, each collaring the other like two wrestlers. Most probably, a minute afterwards they would have been found rolling down stairs like two wild-cats in conflict, had not an old shoemaker, who lived in one of the garrets, interposed as he came down.

'What is the matter, my children?' said he; and on hearing the incoherent statements of very similar complaints, he instantly saw that there was a misunderstanding. Having an eye to business, he at once suggested, therefore, an adjournment to the café at the corner, when he offered to act as mediator for the small fee of an unlimited supply of brandy. The two belligerent parties consented; and when the liquor was produced, made tolerably clear narratives of what had taken place. The result, however, was anything but agreeable. Each thought that the other was a hypocritical deceiver; and the brandy getting into their heads, they well-nigh came to blows again. At length the old shoemaker, who had worked hard at the decanter whilst pretending to listen, got up in a very unsteady state, and exclaimed: 'My children, the best thing you can do, is to go and ask an explanation of Mademoiselle Annette herself. For my part, I have stayed here too long.'

So saying, he fell back on the divan, and was soon fast asleep, whilst the two rivals hastened across the street to get the proposed explanation. Gentlemen, you have no business in that snug little room, when our repentant young coquette is crying her eyes out because not one

of those steps that sound on the stairs announces his coming. However, they knock, and are admitted. Will this persecution never cease? 'Yes, mademoiselle, if you will consent to explain to which of us it is that you have promised marriage?'

'To which of you, gentlemen?' cried Annette, scarcely able to suppress a smile. 'Why, to neither that I am aware of. I never made that promise but once, and that was a very long time ago.'

'At Montmorency?' inquired a manly voice; and in came the tall Jacques with the little aunt from Issy on his arm. The rest of the story is soon told. The soldier had gone away humbled and disappointed; he had made inquiries in the neighbourhood, and all had told him that Annette was engaged either to Majescat or Auguste—to one or both. His first impulse was to return to the army as a volunteer, and stifle the thoughts of the little jilt in gunpowder smoke; but then he remembered the little aunt at Issy—he ought to go and learn what she had to say.

'My boy,' quoth the good old lady, 'take my word for it, Annette has been as faithful and single-hearted as yourself.'

Jacques blushed; but made no comment, except to hint, that he believed the girl's heart had changed; that he was too proud to solicit her; that there were plenty of women who would have him, though probably he should never marry, &c.

'You are a great booby,' quoth the aunt. 'We will go and see Annette directly.'

They arrived, as we have seen, just in time to overhear the dismissal of Auguste and Majescat. These worthies soon felt that they were intruders, and with apologies, hastened off to rejoin the old shoemaker. What took place after their departure we shall not enlarge upon. All that it is necessary to add is, that one morning all the gossips of the quarter, including the now reconciled rivals, collected to sneer at the 'little heiress,' for so they called her, as she got into a cab with Jacques, and drove to the mairie of the tenth arrondissement. The handsome couple did not notice the ill-will of their neighbours, because they were too deeply occupied in admiring one another, in thinking of the past, and forming delicious plans for the future.

#### COAL-WHIPPING.

ANY one who has had the pleasure of steaming down the Thames from London Bridge to Greenwich, may have observed, among other subjects of interest, the unloading of coal from vessels into flat-bottomed barges which lie alongside them in the river. This business of coal unloading, mean as it may seem, has, strangely enough, become the object of special legislation. Elsewhere, ships may do as they like in the way of discharging cargoes; in the Thames, where every transaction takes the form of an old and venerated monopoly, which it would produce an earthquake to disturb, coal must be discharged in only one highly antiquated, very expensive, and enormously laborious manner. Nothing could be more easy than to shew how coal-laden ships might be towed into some species of dock, in which, when the water was withdrawn, the cargo could be dropped into railway wagons, and these run off by steam to the required depôts. 'Twere vain, for such a plan, however convenient to the public, would interfere with too many vested interests to have the least chance of success.

It may not be generally known, that this humble duty of helping a Thames coal-ship to get rid of its cargo, has lately, in violation of all modern notions of free-trade and unrestricted competition, been taken under the care of parliament.

London receives the greater part of its immense supply of coal—now approaching four millions of tons annually—from the Tyne, the Wear, the Tees, and ports adjacent to those rivers. The opening of the Great Northern Railway has encouraged a large inland supply from South Yorkshire; but still the great bulk consists of sea-borne coal, from the Northumberland and Durham ports. When this coal comes into the Thames, the privileges of the corporation of the city begin to operate, and operate, too, in a complex and monopolising way; but we shall attend only to the coal-whipping arrangements. The ships, for the most part, do not discharge their coal upon a quay or wharf, but into a barge or lighter drawn up alongside, which barge conveys them to the wharf of the purchaser, whoever he may be. This transference of the coal from the ship to the barge is called coal-whipping, while the labouring-men who effect it are the coal-whippers. The collier-sailors who navigate the ships to the Thames, the coal-porters employed at the wharfs, and the coal-heavers met with in the streets, are all different classes of men from the coal-whippers. These men—the coal-whippers—are paid wages for their labour, not by the seller or the buyer of the coal, but by the captain of the ship which brings them to London—he being reimbursed by the coal-shipper in the shape of an additional freightage.

Now, any one would think that this very humble kind of labour might be managed without all the cumbersome machinery of a special act of parliament. However, so it is. The men work in gangs, usually of nine in each; and after agreeing with the captain for so much per ton, they divide the money equally. The work itself is soon described: no kind of labour can be simpler or coarser; strong muscles being the only thing required. Some of the men descend into the hold of the ship, and shovel the coal into boxes or baskets; others haul up the boxes or baskets to the level of the deck, by the application of sheer muscular strength to pulleys; and another tilts over the coal into the barge drawn up alongside. The stages, planks, gins, baskets, boxes, shovels, and tackle employed by the men do not belong to them; if not the property of the coal-owner, they are dignified by the protection of parliament, as presently to be explained. The barge into which the coal is whipped belongs to the buyer or coal-merchant. The nine men, working steadily, can whip eighty or ninety tons in a day. Why it should be called 'whipping,' we really have no theory which could enable us to explain. The four men in the hold take it in turn to fill the basket with its  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hundredweight of coal; four others draw it up; and usually one suffices to tilt it. The first four get so heated at their labour, that they work nearly in a state of nudity—flesh-colour mottled with black. The second four make an extraordinary succession of ascents and descents. Standing on the deck, by the side of the hole leading down below, they run up a kind of broad ladder to the height of about five feet; they then fling themselves off, each holding by a rope, and descend to the deck; their momentum brings up the basket of coal, through the intervention of the ropes and pulleys, so that by the time they have descended to the deck, the coal has ascended to a small height above it. There are sixteen basketsful to a ton; each requires that the men should run up five feet, and jump down five feet; therefore, in a day's work of ninety tons, each

of these men runs up 7200 feet of ladder, and jumps down an equal space. If a St Paul's were built on the top of an Arthur's Seat, the summit would be not one-sixth the height to which this day's uncouth climbing amounts—to say nothing of the descent. The coal-whippers receive about 8d. per ton for their labour, which, in a day's work of ninety tons, yields 6s. 6d. per man in a gang of nine: but this says nothing concerning the hours or days during which their earnings are nil.

As we said before, this labour might readily be supposed to be susceptible of easy management between the labour-buyers and the labour-sellers. Why it is not so, may be now explained. There are about 2000 of these coal-whippers in the port of London; and the captains find less trouble in employing them through a middle-man or agent, than by direct application to the men themselves. This fact lies at the bottom of the whole affair. It really does save much time and trouble in collecting men for a particular purpose, to have the services of an agent who knows the when and the where and the how: the only question is, whether the agency is fairly conducted; and that the agency is *not* fairly conducted in respect to the coal-whippers, is the sole cause of the legislation on this subject. Before the Coal-whippers' Act was passed, there were, in the neighbourhood of Wapping, near where the coal-ships are whipped, sixty or seventy public-houses, which had become a kind of places of call for captains who wanted whippers, and for whippers who wanted work; and by degrees, the publicans became agents between the parties. But there is something very disastrous about public-house agency: if a friendly society or a club holds its meetings in such a house, the money spent in drink goes far to neutralise all the benefits anticipated, over and above the moral injury which often accrues to the parties. This was especially the case in respect to the coal-whippers. The publicans played a double game; they carried favour with the captains, and, as has since been fully shewn, made it privately a 'good thing' to them to hire the whippers through them, instead of by direct application. This being once effected, nothing but moral determination could prevent the whippers from becoming dependent on the publicans. The men were expected to spend most of their spare time and most of their money in the public-house, else the publican would not give them employment; and as the publicans had bought over the captains, so to speak, the men could not get employment by application at the ships' side. Many of the publicans were themselves owners of coal-ships, and they could thus enforce still more stringently their own plans of whipping. It was considered below the average that the coal-whippers, one with another, spent ten shillings a week in drink at the public-houses—partly from inclination and partly on compulsion; and they became a debased, dispirited, impoverished body of men.

When a committee on the coal-trade met in 1836, they examined one Joseph Gouhty, a coal-whipper, whose evidence throws a curious light on some of the by-ways of trade. He had been twenty-one years working for 'public-houses,' as he termed it; that is, he had been for this long period a kind of slave to the Wapping tavern-keepers. And he had another three years of servitude to a still lower personage—a beer-shop keeper. Gouhty, as the only means of getting work from this man, had to purchase stone-bottles of beer to take to the ship, and pots of beer to drink

in the street (for beer must not be 'drunk on the premises' in such a shop). Before he could obtain payment of his wages, when his day's whipping was done, he used to be kept lingering about the shop till ten o'clock at night, in order that he might have plenty of time to spend money in drink. When he wanted a job, he applied to his slave-master, who told him to 'wait:' this waiting being understood to mean that Gouhty was expected to spend at once in the shop some of that money which his wife and children needed at home. Gouhty says there were among his comrades 'constant men' and 'stragglers'; the former mostly lodged at the public-houses, and always had 'first choice' when a ship had to be whipped; whereas the stragglers were out-door hands, whose luck was measured according to the amount of their money which passed into the tapster's hands. Another whipper, George Childs, told a tale which we may as well give in his own words:—'There are grocers, there are butchers, there are beer-shop keepers; and when they get the ships, those that keep the shops take every advantage of the coal-whippers. In case the ship works from a grocer's shop, they are obliged to take so much sugar and tea, and pay an exorbitant price for it; if it (the ship) works from a public-house, it is only drink that you are obliged to have, and you must pay them what price and take what stuff they think proper to give you; and if the score is wrong, you must pay them whatever they think proper to charge you; and they expect you to take the trifle of money that is left; and after they have deducted what they think proper, they say you must take joints of meat, that you have to pay eightpence a pound for, which you could buy at fourpence; and instead of having my money, and going home to my family, I am obliged to sit and drink at the public-house before I can get paid, and then go home perhaps at eleven o'clock at night.' Poor Childs! he and his companion Gouhty were in a degraded position, and doubtless thought the 'parliament men' could 'do something' for them. But there are Gouhtys all around us—industrial Gouhtys, corporal Gouhtys, moral Gouhtys; and if the wisdom of parliament is expected to cure them of all their evils, that wisdom must be more potent than it has ever yet shewn itself to be. However, we are somewhat anticipating the course of our subject.

What was to be done? Were these men to be left in their debasement, or could any attempt be made to raise them? Lieutenant Arnold, a kindly-disposed naval officer, determined, about twenty years ago, to see what he could do in the matter. He resolved to brave the publicans. He opened an office in Wapping, at which captains and whippers could meet each other; and he sought to bring over both bodies to his views. He undertook that the men should receive the whole of their earnings, without any deduction for office-expenses. The publicans, however, were on the alert; they kept their own corps of poor dupes bound to them, and prevented any transfer to the lieutenant's office; or, if any did go over, the rest were employed to harass and injure them. If any strangers came into the river from other employments, offering to whip coal at a little lower price, the publicans' myrmidons contrived to drive them away; for these rough diamonds can physically vanquish competitors, though they cannot morally vanquish the tapsters. Unfortunately for the benevolent officer's views, neither the coal-owners nor the ship-owners rendered him any very warm assistance; and the scheme died away for want of adequate support. The publicans then ruled with more tyranny than before; and not only publicans, but grocers, butchers, &c., who acquired influence with collier-captains, and exerted that influence to make the whippers buy bad grocery and bad meat at high prices. At length the attention of parliament was called to the subject; and in 1843—



not without grave doubts among the more thoughtful of our legislators—an act of parliament was passed, with no other object than to regulate the earnings of the coal-whippers in the Thames.

The purport of this statute may be understood from the following summary:—Nine commissioners were appointed, to form a Coal-whippers' Board—four chosen by the Board of Trade, four by the Corporation of London, and one by the Ship-owners' Society of London. Every coal-whipper was to have his name, age, &c., registered in a book kept at an office in Wapping by the commissioners; in return for which, a certificate was given to him. No one must work in the Thames as a coal-whipper, unless so registered, with the exception of the crews of the ships, or the servants of the coal-owner, who, however, very seldom whip coal. When a ship of coal is sold, the master or captain sends word to the office, stating the place, time, and quantity required to be whipped. The commissioners provide a room, at which the whippers attend, and a clerk holds a kind of auction. He tells the men of the 'job' that has just come in, and leaves each gang to name the price at which they will undertake the work, the lowest offer being accepted. The captain is not obliged to accept the offer; but if he does so accept, he is responsible to the commissioners for the due fulfilment of his part of the contract. The whippers go to work, and whip the ship-load of coal; the captain pays at the office, and the money is handed over to the men, with a deduction not exceeding a farthing in a shilling for expenses. The coal-owner may use his own baskets, shovels, tackle, &c.; but if he borrow them, he must borrow only from the commissioners, and pay them a stipulated sum for the hire. The whole of the coal-whipping carried on in any part of the Thames between London Bridge and Gravesend, is subject to this statute; and several offices have been established as assembling-points for the men. The act was to be in operation three years.

Thus did parliament throw its protecting shield over these dusky labourers; and at the expiration of the three years, the act was renewed for another period of five years, terminable in 1851, with a few minor alterations in the details. The general impression seems to be, that the men are better off in consequence of this statute, and that the coal-buyers and coal-sellers are none the worse. This is the reward which the advocates of the measure have for their services; and all is so far well. But there are breakers ahead. The men have on some occasions so interpreted the statute, as to claim one of those very monopolies which it has been the object of our free-trade legislation to remove; and there are other kinds of labourers who are calling out for similar exceptional legislation. In 1851, not without a feeling of uneasiness among the statesmen who consented to the measure, the statute, with a few alterations, was extended in its operation to 1856.

Now arises a troublesome question. If the poor coal-whippers are protected by the majesty of the imperial parliament, why should not the poor ballast-heavers? A very natural question this. True, the ballast-heavers of the Thames are only about one-fourth as numerous as the coal-heavers; but as they have, unfortunately, suffered themselves to be nailed down (morally speaking) to the counters of the publicans, they claim the same kind of sympathy, whatever that may be, as their swartly brethren. The ballast-heavers supply empty ships with gravel-ballast; and this being a trade in which the persons employed seem not able to take care of themselves, an attempt was made in 1852 to legislate for them. The effort did not succeed, but there may be another; and now comes a point for consideration: If 2000 of one kind of labourers, and 500 of another, have a special protective statute, where is this to stop? The shirt-makers, the sloop-workers, and others who earn a poor pittance

by hard labour—is there to be a statute for each of these classes, with a board of commissioners, and all the parade of official machinery? and if so, why not also for the Spitalfields weavers? and if for them, why not for the handloom-weavers generally? We trust these remarks may not be deemed unkind to all these industrious workers. But there may be such a thing as mistaken kindness; and it is worth a thought whether this special or exceptional kind of legislation, if carried out according to its natural tendency, might not throw general commerce and industry into confusion. Already, vast mischief has been done by trying to regulate the hiring of sailors. They are viewed as children, and the means adopted to take care of them, keep them in pupillage, or send them to other countries for employment. All this is bad. Let all classes of men be left to regulate their own affairs—if not fit for that, educate them up to the point of self-reliance and management.

#### THE DORP AND THE VELD.

SUCH is the name of a small volume,\* in which 'Charles Barter, Esq., B.C.L., fellow of New College, Oxford,' gives an account of six months which he spent in 1850-1, in the colony of Natal, South Africa. Of the circumstances which led an Oxford scholar to mingle in the rough scenes of a young colony, we hear nothing; but we have reason to be thankful for them, whatever they were, as a recital of the experiences and adventures of a highly-educated man in such a country is something of a pleasing novelty. He describes, with great vivacity, his travels from the harbour of D'Urban, where he landed, to the inland village of Maritzburg, and thence through a succession of settlements of the Dutch *Boers*, in quest of a knowledge of the country. Sketches of rustic colonial life, of the character and habits of the natives, and of the quaggas, wildebeests, and other animals peculiar to the country, help to sustain attention through the volume; and we leave off reading with the sense of having acquired a tolerably distinct idea of this interesting province, where the gifts of nature are as yet a good deal more divine than the spirit of man.

Having come with two friends to Plaatsberg Farm, Mr Barter was detained there for some weeks by illness, the guest of the farmer, an Englishman, named Moffat. It was a place still in its infancy. 'Some rough cultivation had been attempted, and very fine crops of wheat had been produced; but the fires which, whether lighted by careless travellers, or purposely kindled by the natives to destroy the last year's grass, annually spread over the country, had passed through the neglected farm, leaving no vestige beyond the faint marks of the plough on the surface of the soil, and a few blackened stumps where the posts of the house and the cattle-kraal had stood. A fresh beginning was to be made, and my host set about it with his usual energy. Besides the water-course before mentioned, which must have been a work of time and trouble, and along which he had sown the seeds of the *seringeboom*, a strip of ground had been turned up with the spade, and set with young fruit-trees and garden-plants, and the ground-plan of a complete and substantial dwelling had been marked out, and a contract made for its erection. The two workmen who had taken the contract were, as is often the case in these parts, discharged soldiers, who, attracted by the fame of the rising place,

\* W. S. Orr, London. 1852.



had wandered thither from the frontier in search of employment.

'It was settled that they should at once take up their residence on the farm, and they accordingly returned to Harrismith for their tent and household gods, one of them having a Dutch wife. The next morning they made their appearance in a light horse-wagon, drawn in this instance by oxen, and driven by the most wretched specimen of a Boer I had yet seen. His tall lathy person was set off by a short-skirted linen shooting-jacket, evidently intended for a body rather less than the middle size; while the decidedly hang-dog expression of his countenance, otherwise passable enough, was not diminished by the mass of long coal-black hair that fell straight over his forehead, and the ample folds of a dingy white handkerchief which enveloped his throat, and was tied in a small knot in the centre. Everything about him was lank and dirty, and unwholesome. Add to this, that one of his hands had been mutilated by the bursting of a gun, and you may conceive that Thys Swanepool's appearance was anything but prepossessing. He was, nevertheless, received at once into the tent, and entertained as a guest. It is difficult to make any distinction in the treatment of Boers, some of whom are very decent fellows, while, with others, it is next to impossible to sit at the same table, since, if one of them should fancy that he has met with scant courtesy, the character of the host is lost, the Boers having very high theoretical notions on the subject of hospitality.'

'Though we now mustered several hands, I cannot say that much was done; indeed, accustomed as I had been to the constant and stirring employment of a Canadian wilderness farm, where exertion is never suffered to flag, where the axe or the plough is always at work, and the different tasks of clearing, stumping, fencing, &c., succeed one another without an interval of rest; with these reminiscences of agricultural life, I could not avoid being struck with the contrast presented by the listless inactivity, I might almost say drowsiness, that pervaded everything at Plaatberg Farm.

'There was as yet but one plough in the district, and that was engaged by the rival agriculturist at Harrismith; spade cultivation was not thought of; and the only real work, the herding and tending of the cattle, milking the cows, &c., was performed by Caffres, seven of whom had come to seek for employment, and had been engaged for a year, at the wages of a heifer apiece, in value about L.2.'

In the dull life which Mr Barter led at Plaatberg, he found a resource in sport among the wild animals of the district. The appearance of a stray buck on the edge of the neighbouring rock produced a general excitement. 'Sometimes it would be a rheebok, with his light tapering horns; sometimes the larger, but less graceful rietbok, the striped quagga, or the brindled gnu: nothing came amiss to us either for sport or food. The latter consideration, indeed, was by far the most important, as the flesh of the Caffre goats was not particularly fat or tender, and the continual sacrifice of oxen threatened to put an end to the herd. Not that we fared badly: excellent tea and coffee, rice and sugar; cookies, or unleavened cakes of coarse meal, baked on the gridiron; and, above all, a jar of delicious wild honey, left us little to complain of on that score. Mealies and milk, or Indian corn, pounded and boiled after the manner of oatmeal-porridge, made a superb

dish; and even Caffre corn, in spite of its red colour, which reminded me of a linsed mash, was not unpalatable when treated in the same way. The wild asparagus grew in profusion in the patch of bush in front of our tent, and though not equal in flavour to the cultivated plant, was a welcome addition to our table.

'Meanwhile, old Schutkraal had been enjoying a season of uninterrupted rest and plenty in the rich pastures of Plaatberg, and was as frisky as a young colt. It was high time to give him a gallop, and I was anxious, besides, to make my first essay in African hunting, which my unlucky illness had so long delayed. Behold me, then, equipped for action, not in scarlet and leathers, but in homely fustian, jacket and continuations included; a napless green covering, of the wide-awake class, does duty for the velvet hunting-cap. The spurs are the only correct part of the turn-out, though they are somewhat out of character with the *vel schoen*, or shoes of rough brown skin. But how is this? There is only one! Never mind, it is the custom; so we follow it. My horse has rather a large head, to be sure, and the stirrups are not so bright as they might be; but one must not be too particular in the *Veldt*. My attendant, I should rather say my companion—Moffat's little apprentice, Jem—looks scarcely more respectable than myself; but he sits well upon his horse—a stray one which we have found near the farm, and are keeping till the owner can be discovered; a little exercise in the meantime will do it no harm. Jem is unarmed; I carry, resting on my right thigh, in true Africandee fashion, a double-barrelled smooth bore, which, as I never shoot further than I can see, I prefer infinitely to a rifle, even for ball, to say nothing of the convenience of being able to vary the charge, according to the size or nature of the object which may chance to present itself, from a partridge to a lion—and now, *vamos!*

'We had ridden about five miles without seeing a living creature to relieve the eye, wearied with the endless prospect of mountain and plain, *kranz*, and ant-heaps, when, on topping a low road, we came suddenly in sight of a herd of some fifty or sixty quaggas, which were quietly grazing about a quarter of a mile from us. We immediately turned, and keeping under the shelter of some rising-ground which favoured our design, approached unperceived within a few hundred yards of them, when the chase commenced in earnest. A cloud of dust marked the course of the herd, as they dashed off at a slapping pace, followed at very unequal distances by Jem and myself at the top of our speed.

'I soon found that old Schutkraal, though decidedly improved in appearance, was in no condition for a twenty minutes' hunt with twelve stone on his back; and though plied with bit and spur, he was falling rapidly behind. Jem's horse, on the contrary, carrying feather-weight, held gallantly on, and soon brought his rider up with the troop, into the very centre of which he dashed, trying to separate and turn them, so as to give me the chance of a shot; in this, however, he did not succeed, and finding that I was unable to overtake him, he abandoned the pursuit after a run of about three miles.

'Had I been decently mounted, the herd would have been quite at our mercy; for these animals are no match for a horse, and if hard pressed, are soon brought to a stand-still. At a farm on the Valsch River, where a number of Caffres were employed, a quagga was every morning singled from the herd, hunted down, and driven into the kraal, where the natives despatched him with their assegais, and fed on the flesh, of which they are very fond. This feat was performed daily for more than a year by one horse, a large gray, or *schimmel*, the favourite colour in South Africa. I speak literally when I say that the horse performed the feat, for the rider—any Hottentot or Caffre who could sit on his back

—had no share in the matter, the animal himself hunting, turning, and driving the game in the most skilful manner, and evidently enjoying the sport with the keenest zest.

This must be considered as a curious fact, for the quagga is a species nearly allied to the horse: it is like the zeal of the dog in hunting the fox. In returning, meeting a herd of wildebeests—'as they were coming down the wind, I resolved to await them, and despatched Jem with directions to get, if possible, in their rear, and drive them into the ambush. Meanwhile, I dismounted; and knowing that some time must elapse before the manœuvre could be effected, stretched myself on the stony ground (there is no turf in Africa), just below the edge of the sand, and lighting my pipe, amused myself by watching the motions of the advancing herd, which my position enabled me to do without the slightest danger of exciting their alarm, and defeating my plans for their destruction. They were headed by a large bull, evidently the father of the herd, with a long flowing mane on his neck, and a bristly beard descending down the dewlap to the breast—a noble-looking animal, whom I at once singled out for the first barrel. Now he would lie down and take a deliberate roll, the herd stopping as if to witness the grotesque exhibition; then he would engage in a mock-fight with one of his subjects, the ungainly creatures butting each other with their curiously-shaped horns, and cutting the most antic capers, in evident good-humour and diversion. Suddenly a quick movement is visible in the rear of the herd; the combatants cease their game, and throwing their heads up—

A moment snuff the tainted gale.

Another moment of indecision, and they are off, the large bull still leading, and, to my intense delight, making straight for the *poort*, within sixty yards of which I am now crouching down, almost breathless with excitement, but quite determined not to throw away my first shot. As they come nearer, I stoop down till the rim of my green hat touches the grass, from which it cannot be distinguished—and now they approach the opening, and are fairly within shot. I can scarcely contain myself, but must wait till the foremost have passed through, so that I may take them from behind. Another second of suspense—painfully long—and then a black head issues from the little pass. There is no hurry now: the sight of my gun is on the object—follows it steadily for an instant. A loud report, succeeded by that peculiar "thud" which the archer knows as the sign of a successful aim, and the fine animal is rolling in the dust; while the affrighted herd rush over the body of their late leader, and scamper wildly across the plain, one of their number carrying off with some difficulty the contents of my second barrel, which had not been aimed with equally fatal accuracy. Eager to follow up the wounded game, I turned round to look for my horse, whom I had left with the bridle-rein hanging to the ground, which ought to have been sufficient to secure his remaining in the same spot, but, to my consternation, he was nowhere to be seen; and it was not till after a hard chase, that he was recaptured by Jem, who had seen his escape from afar, and who found him, notwithstanding his assumed weariness, gallantly heading another herd of quaggas, without any appearance of exhaustion or fatigue. While engaged in pursuing him, Jem contrived to separate a young filly from the herd. The little creature, missing its mother, followed the horse willingly; keeping up with it at a fast gallop, though it did not appear to be above a fortnight old. I at once determined, if possible, to take it back to the farm and rear it; and accordingly, we not only gave up all further thought of the wounded game, but, on the principle that a live *nas* is better than a dead lion, decided on leaving the victim of my first shot on the field; contenting

ourselves with piling stones over the carcass, to secure it from the *aas vogels* or vultures, which seldom fail to discover the hunter's *cache*, and which were even now appearing like specks on the horizon, attracted from unknown distances, by their unerring instincts, to the scene of slaughter.

The captive turned out to be a filly of the zebra variety; Mr Barter succeeded in getting it home, though much against its will; and for some days he hoped to succeed in bringing it up, feeding it with milk from a horn by a leather tube. 'The young creature fed heartily, and was soon able to dispense with the horn, when we added a little bran or soaked meal to the milk. It became quite tame also, and would follow me about like a dog, pushing its way in between the folds of the tent, and rubbing its head against my shoulder, till I really became quite attached to it.

'But, alas! the fate of all pets, whether zebras or gazelles, was not to be averted. One morning, on issuing from the tent, I found my favourite lying at the door quite dead. It had been a rough night, and I blamed myself for having turned it out the evening before, when it came in as if to ask for shelter; but I afterwards ascertained that one of the Caffres, in his mistaken zeal, had given it boiled milk, which had been the cause of its death. I half suspected that the deed was of *malice prepense*, and done with a view to the flesh; but if so, the villain was disappointed, as the hyæna came early the same evening, and carried off the body from within five yards of the tent. The next morning, one or two bones, picked clean, lying by the side of the *apruil*, were all that remained of my zebra filly.'

Unexpected accidents, overturning all plans—severe hardships, cheerfully sustained under hope of ultimate triumph—rough, but exciting adventure—these form the staple of life in a young colony. One can imagine that, in a genial climate, the difficulties which are met with will often rather give a zest than a sourness to existence. We have a specimen of the troubles to which a colonist is liable in Natal, in the following little sketch:—'About this time, our party was increased, and some life infused into our dulness, by the arrival of Mr McCabe, an enterprising farmer from the Bloem Fontein District, who had given up his land on the Modder River for the mountain-pastures of Harrismith. He had travelled in truly patriarchal guise, with all his *vee* or live-stock, consisting of a flock of 500 Merino ewes, a herd of 140 cattle, and from fifteen to twenty horses, mares, and foals. His journey had been attended with unusual difficulties and disasters, and he gave us a melancholy account of the country through which he had passed. A severe drought had visited the district—not a blade of grass was to be seen. The cattle were dying in all directions; and those of Maroko, the friendly chief of the Barlorges, were said to have perished by hundreds. McCabe himself had lost several horses on the road, and all his stock was in a deplorable condition. To add to his troubles, it was lambing-time with his flock; and his mother and sister, who accompanied him, had often been obliged to share the already narrow accommodation of a loaded wagon with the new-born offspring of their sheep and cows. But discomforts and privations from which an Englishwoman would shrink with horror, are little regarded by her African sister; and these ladies not only appeared in excellent health and spirits, but, by their cheerful activity, and that peculiar talent for making the best of everything which women alone possess, put our indolent habits to the blush, and converted our previous lethargy into something like spirit and animation. The day after his arrival, we were all hard at work building a kraal for the lambs: loosening huge masses of mountain-limestone from their beds, rolling them down the steep hill-side, and piling them into a rough but very substantial wall. The next day, a

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hunting expedition was arranged; so quickly could McCabe pass from his vexatious troubles to amusement. Of course, where hardship makes no entrance into the spirit, it is the same as if it did not exist.

These are but snatches of a book abounding in such lifelike scenes, and which no one contemplating Natal as a future home ought to omit becoming acquainted with.

#### THE FRENCH 'ZADKIEL' FOR 1853.

For a number of years, a section of the English reading-public has been annually enlightened by the vaticinations of an illustrious unknown, who publishes his almanac under the affected name of Zadkiel. There is, moreover, a brother seer—or perhaps we ought to say rival—who calls himself Raphael, and he also publishes a prophetic almanac. How many of the thousands of purchasers really place any reliance on the prophetic hash dished up for them by the two renowned professors, we cannot say; but we have reason to believe, that the advent of steam-engines and electric telegraphs has by no means annihilated the race of the credulous, who, from time immemorial, have had implicit reliance on the preternatural gifts of the readers of the stars, and interpreters of coming events.

We find that France also can boast a prophet and almanac-maker, for we have a volume of nearly two hundred pages lying before us, published in Paris, and entitled the *Prophetic Almanac, Picturesque and Useful*, for 1853, published by a Nephew of Nostradamus! It is a singular and puzzling mélange, containing, we must admit, some very useful and superior writing; but its main features, and four-fifths of its contents, are of a prophetic nature. It is in its thirteenth year of publication, and the exceedingly low price at which such a comparatively large book is sold—fifty centimes, or about 4½d.—alone proves that its circulation must be very great. We think our readers may derive some amusement, if not instruction, from what we shall lay before them concerning the divinatory portions of the volume. First, let us give the grave prefatory passage upon 'realised predictions,' for we think it a curiosity of the style of impudent charlatany which is now-a-days so often used to impose upon the easily duped:—'If the researches of those who study the future are encouraged by the approbation of some serious thinkers, on the other hand they meet with many who are incredulous, always disposed to deny, always ready to shut their eyes to the light. The best, or rather the only means of convincing these hardened sceptics, is to prove to them, by precise facts, that the science of prophecy is not vain; that its calculations frequently attain their end; and that future things cease to be a mystery for those who seek them with sincere faith and in a right spirit.' The writer then goes on to eulogise the accuracy of predictions in the former volumes of the almanac; and after giving a list of references to them, he triumphantly concludes by asserting, that 'it will be impossible to doubt the grave and useful character of the labours of the *Almanach Prophetique*!' This is quite in accordance with the motto of the work—'Education, Amelioration, and Progress!'—is it not?

We first have three prophecies on the destruction of Islamism, which is to be annihilated, and the ashes of Mohammed dispersed to the four quarters of heaven. This is to be effected by 'a certain Christian prince, who will take possession at the same time of Egypt and of Palestine.' We presume that the present Emperor of France is alluded to; and, by the way, we may inform the reader, that our two English sages,

Zadkiel and Raphael, both agree in their several almanacs for the present year, in predicting the death of Louis Napoleon in July 1854! Unless these wise men are secretly in league together, it certainly is curious enough for both of them to make so bold a prediction, and to agree as to the date of its realisation. One of them—we really forget which—made a decided hit by announcing in his almanac for 1851, that Wellington would die in the succeeding year.

Passing over various isolated prophecies, new and old, we may pause a moment to notice a curious article about a prophecy of a Jesuit priest, named Boniface Ceracchi, who, in a little volume printed some eighty or more years ago, entitled *Mathematical Prophecies for the End of the Eighteenth Century*, predicted aerial navigation.

And now for the different means of predicting the future! We do not intend even to name one tithe of the species of divination enumerated; but we may cull a few for the amusement of an idle moment, commencing with Arithmancy, or the art of divining by numbers. An elaborate paper is devoted to the application of this art to the year 1853. The conclusion the nephew of Nostradamus arrives at is, that the analysis of the present year gives six favourable figures, and three the reverse; and he calculates, therefore, that there are two probabilities of good-fortune to one of evil. Another curious application of arithmancy is, to discover what Christian names are predictive of happiness or misery. The reader is especially warned to make use of the very valuable knowledge thus imparted, to guide him in the choice of a wife. 'I would not,' solemnly exclaims the French Zadkiel, 'for all the world, if I were a man, call myself Jacques, nor marry a woman of the name of Reine!' We shall not give any of the intricate calculations by which the sage shews us how to select our future partners for life, but will note some of the results. 'The figure 3 is good; every Christian name which contains it or its multiplicands, is a happy first name. The figure 8 is bad; every Christian name which gives that figure, or which is not multipliable by 3, is an unhappy first name.' Jean and Anna are 'essentially happy;' and if the following couples wed, there is every prospect of their union being happy: Paul and Pauline, Louis and Louise, Ernest and Ernestine, Antoine and Antoinette, Albert and Albertine, &c. As proofs of the correctness of his theory, the sage refers to the unhappy results of marriages between eminent personages who foolishly wedded in spite of the cabalistic influence of their unhappily-assorted Christian names. Among the number quoted are Mary Stuart and Francis II., Henry IV. and Marguerite de Valois, and the Louises XIV., XV., XVI. 'And the Emperor Napoleon, whose Christian name is so sonorous, so glorious, and ought to be the symbol of power yet more than of glory—for what reason was he, who had imbibed good-fortune from every pore, he who had knowledge sufficient to render him master of his destiny—for what reason was Napoleon, happy in all else, unhappy in marriage? Because Josephine, so worthy of him by all accounts, had in her Christian name a very unfortunate figure—because Marie-Louise, his second wife, had not a better!'

Ah, Napoleon the Great! had you consulted the Nephew of Nostradamus, you might, it seems, have died the Emperor of France, or perhaps even the omniarch of the world, instead of a broken-hearted captive at St Helena! It is well worthy of remark, that in the long list our French Zadkiel gives of happy and unhappy *prénoms*, we cannot discover that of Eugénie, the present Empress of France. Now, may we suggest the probability, that our cunning friend read in the stars that a lady of this name would become the bride of Louis Napoleon? If so, we have only further to suppose that Eugénie is a name portending



evil fortune, and the mystery of the omission is very explicable; for had the sage predicted misfortune from the conjunction of the names Louis Napoleon and Eugénie, can we doubt that the said Louis would have failed to put down the *Almanach Prophétique*, and clap the Nephew of Nostradamus in durance vile? Really, we cannot sufficiently admire the foresight and tact of the sage; for, now that the marriage in question is *un fait accompli*, he will be enabled, in his next year's publication, to predict consistently all sorts of happiness to the illustrious couple.

We should perhaps weary our readers by further quotations, and so we here take leave of the Nephew of Nostradamus, only wishing that he may eventually receive the reward he richly merits for fanning the expiring embers of superstition and credulity.

#### A WONDERFUL BONE.

In a small work on the *Intellectual and Moral Development of the Present Age*, by Mr Samuel Warren, Recorder of Hull (Blackwood & Sons), the author touches on the subject of comparative anatomy, and the pitch to which a study of it has been carried in this country. We gladly make room for the following passages:—

"The incident which I am about to mention, exhibits the result of an immense induction of particulars in this noble science, and bears no faint analogy to the magnificent astronomical calculation, or prediction, whichever one may call it, presently to be laid before you. Let it be premised, that Cuvier, the late illustrious French physiologist and comparative anatomist had said, that in order to deduce from a single fragment of its structure, the entire animal, it was necessary to have a *tooth*, or an entire articulated *extremity*. In his time, the comparison was limited to the external configuration of bone. The study of the *internal* structure had not proceeded so far.

"In the year 1839, Professor Owen was sitting alone in his study, when a shabbily-dressed man made his appearance, announcing that he had got a great curiosity, which he had brought from New Zealand, and wished to dispose of it to him. Any one in London can now see the article in question, for it is deposited in the Museum of the College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields. It has the appearance of an old marrow-bone, about six inches in length, and rather more than two inches in thickness, with *both extremities broken off*; and Professor Owen considered, that to whatever animal it might have belonged, the fragment must have lain in the earth for centuries. At first, he considered this same marrow-bone to have belonged to an ox—at all events, to a quadruped; for the wall or rim of the bone was six times as thick as the bone of any bird, even the ostrich. He compared it with the bones in the skeleton of an ox, a horse, a camel, a tapir—and every quadruped apparently possessing a bone of that size and configuration; but it corresponded with none. On this, he very narrowly examined the surface of the bony rim, and at length became satisfied that this monstrous fragment must have belonged to a *bird*! to one at least as large as an ostrich, but of a totally different species; and, consequently, one never before heard of, as an ostrich was by far the biggest bird known. From the difference in the *strength* of the bone, the ostrich being unable to fly, so must have been unable this unknown bird; and so our anatomist came to the conclusion, that this old shapeless bone indicated the former existence, in New Zealand, of some huge bird, at least as great as an ostrich, but of a far heavier and more sluggish kind. Professor Owen was confident of the validity of his conclusions, but could communicate that confidence to no one else; and notwithstanding attempts to dissuade him from committing his views to the public, he printed his deductions in the *Transactions of the Zoological Society* for the year 1839, where fortunately they remain on record as conclusive evidence of the fact of his having then made this guess, so to speak, in the dark. He caused the bone, however, to be engraved; and having sent 100 copies of the engraving to New Zealand, in the hopes of their being distributed, and leading to interesting results, he patiently waited for

three years—namely, till the year 1842—when he received intelligence from Dr Buckland, at Oxford, that a great box, just arrived from New Zealand, consigned to himself, was on its way, unopened, to Professor Owen; who found it filled with bones, palpably of a bird, one of which was three feet in length, and much more than double the size of any bone in the ostrich! And out of the contents of this box the professor was positively enabled to articulate almost the entire skeleton of a huge wingless bird, between *ten and eleven feet* in height, its bony structure in strict conformity with the fragment in question; and that skeleton may be at any time seen at the Museum of the College of Surgeons, towering over, and nearly twice the height of the skeleton of an ostrich; and at its feet is lying the old bone from which alone consummate anatomical science had deduced such an astounding reality: the existence of an enormous extinct creature of the bird kind, in an island where previously no bird had been known to exist larger than a pheasant or a common fowl!"

#### CURIOUS CALCULATIONS.

To a person as highly intelligent and as thoroughly experienced as, notwithstanding her youth, Mrs Fitzjames certainly was, in all the mysteries of love-making, the importance of a romantic country excursion was perfectly well understood. Had it been required of her, indeed, she would have been perfectly well able, also, to set down, in numerical proportion, the respective value, in this line, of every occurrence likely to be produced by the accidents of human life. For example: supposing the sum-total of 1000 to be the amount required for the achievement of any given conquest, she would systematically have set down the relative value of every separate manoeuvre somewhat in this wise: first sight, under all advantages of dress, 100; under disadvantage of ditto, but not presumed to be actually disfiguring, 50; morning occupation, with hands ungloved, and hair hanging in disorder (nicely arranged), 50; caught reading a newly-arrived review (if the chase be literary), 25; transcribing music, if he be musical, 150; a ball well lighted, with a good reposing-room, 70; fancy-dress ditto, 160; caught singing an Italian bravura, or a French ballad, if you have a voice, and he has ears, 175; to be seen at early church, if he be a Puseyite, 77; at an evening lecture, if he be an Evangelical, 77; to be seen darning stockings, if he be a rich miser, 100; to be seen embroidering in gold and seed-pearls, if he be a poor elegant, 100; a picnic, everything being *couleur de rose*, 50; ditto, with a storm, 75; ditto, with a moon, and a little dancing after, 150; ditto, when matters are tolerably far advanced beforehand, 200. And so on, with an infinity of items, every one of which would have shewn an admirable knowledge of the human heart.—*Uncle Walter*, by Mrs Trollope.

#### NEW ANTIQUITIES.

We have, on various occasions, warned our antiquarian readers against spurious fabrications of articles of curiosity and *verbi*, especially of certain mediæval seals in *jet*, a substance easily engraved or fashioned into any shape. The unprincipled fabricators of these objects, encouraged, no doubt, by their success among the unwary, continue to follow their criminal occupation, and have lately attempted a higher flight. We have lately been shewn a jet seal, bearing the head of the Emperor Severus, with his name and titles! We believe the *atelier* of the rogues whose ingenuity is exercised upon these counterfeits, is somewhere in Yorkshire. While on this subject, we may mention that we have been informed, that at many of the curiosity-shops in London, forged mediæval and other mediæval brass seals are kept on sale; and some of them being *casts* of real specimens, are well calculated to dupe the inexperienced.—*Literary Gazette*.

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